

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended): An apparatus for protection of an assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, the apparatus comprising at least:
 - (a) A shaft and shaft mounted components with bores fitted to said shaft;
 - (b) Shaft mounting surfaces that are portions of the shaft surfaces underneath or in close proximity to shaft mounted components;
 - (c) Mounting bore surfaces that are bore surfaces of the shaft mounted components fitted ~~or in close proximity~~ to the shaft;
 - (d) Stress concentrated areas that are portions of the shaft mounting surfaces or portions of the mounting bore surfaces being subject to local high mechanical stresses;
 - (e) Reserves of sacrificial metal being either mounted or deposited, at least partially, to said shaft mounting surfaces and/or to said mounting bore surfaces, said reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components, said reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to both the shaft and the shaft mounted

components against corrosion and preventing corrosion related failures in stress concentrated areas.

2. (Previously presented): the apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 1, wherein
 - (a) the shaft mounting surfaces have at least a contact free shaft mounting area that is substantially free from contact with the shaft mounted components after completion of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components;
 - (b) the mounting bore surfaces have at least a contact free mounting bore area that is substantially free from contact with the shaft after completion of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components;
 - (c) the stress concentrated areas are substantially included in the contact free shaft mounting area or in the contact free mounting bore surfaces.
 - (d) the reserves of sacrificial metal are either mounted or deposited to said contact free shaft mounting areas and/or to said contact free mounting bore areas, said reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components, said reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to both the shaft and the shaft mounted components against corrosion and preventing corrosion related failures in the stress concentrated areas.

3. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 1, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc alloy deposited to the shaft mounting surfaces or to the mounting bore surfaces.

4. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 1, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc alloy deposited to the shaft mounting surfaces or to the mounting bore surfaces by inorganic zinc silicate coating, electroplating, thermal spraying or galvanizing.

5. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 1, wherein
 - (a) the shaft mounting surfaces and the mounting bore surfaces are covered by residual mounting lubricant / sealant;
 - (b) the reserves of sacrificial metal are sacrificial metals contained within the residual mounting lubricant / sealant that are deposited to the shaft mounting surfaces and to the mounting bore surfaces.

6. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 1, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal being either mounted or deposited, at least partially, to said shaft mounting surfaces only or to said mounting bore surfaces only, said reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components, said reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to both the shaft mounting surfaces and to the mounting bore surfaces against corrosion and preventing corrosion related failures in stress concentrated areas.
7. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 2, wherein
- (a) the contact-free shaft mounting areas are portions of shaft fillet and its immediate peripheries or portions of shaft groove and its immediate peripheries that are substantially free from contact with the shaft mounted components after completion of assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components;
 - (b) the contact-free mounting bore areas are portions of the bore surfaces of the shaft mounted components being fitted over or in close proximity to the shaft fillet or the shaft groove.

8. (currently amended): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 2, wherein

- (a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted component is an assembly of axle / axle mounted bearing of~~in~~a railway vehicle car wheel set;
- (b) the contact-free shaft mounting areas are portions of axle fillet surfaces, axle groove surfaces, axle journal surfaces or axle dust guard surfaces being substantially free from contact with the axle mounted bearing;
- (c) the contact-free mounting bore areas are portions of bore surfaces of the axle mounted bearing components including backing rings, seal wear rings and spacer rings.

9. (currently amended): An apparatus for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, the apparatus comprising at least:

- (a) A shaft and shaft mounted components;
- (b) Internal lubricant encased within the shaft mounted components;
- (c) Contact-free internal areas that are portions of internal surfaces of the shaft mounted components being in contact with the internal lubricant and being substantially free from contact with other shaft mounted components;
- (d) Internal reserves of sacrificial metal being either mounted or deposited, at least partially, to said contact-free internal areas, said internal reserves of

sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft mounted components, said internal reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to the shaft mounted components against corrosion.

10. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 9, wherein the internal reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc alloy deposited to the contact-free internal areas.

11. (Previously presented): The apparatus for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 9, wherein the internal reserves of sacrificial metal are magnesium or magnesium alloys and are mounted to the contact-free internal areas.

12. (currently amended): The apparatus for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 9, wherein

(a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted component is an assembly of axle / axle mounted bearing ~~of~~in a railway vehicle-car-wheel-set;

(b) the contact-free internal areas are portions of bearing cup surface, bearing spacer ring surface being in contact with internal lubricant and being substantially free from contact with other bearing components.

13. (currently amended): An apparatus for protection of an assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, the apparatus comprising at least:

- (a) A shaft with a one or a plurality of adjacent varying diameter sections thereby defining, in each section, a maximum sectional diameter and a minimum sectional diameter;
- (b) ~~Two shaft mounted components, each mounted to said shaft with at least one gap between the shaft mounted components, said gap making one of the varying diameter sections of said shaft exposed to corrosion or impact damages and defining an exposed varying diameter section of said shaft in close proximity to said varying diameter section of said shaft from one end;~~
- (c) ~~Stress concentrated areas that are portions of the adjacent varying diameter sections of said shaft or portions of the shaft mounted components, said stress concentrated areas being subject to local high mechanical stresses;~~
- (d) ~~A protective sleeve sealing member in resilient material, covering at least partially said varying diameter section of said shaft and sealing at least one of the two joints between said shaft and shaft mounted components; said protective sleeve being mounted to the exposed varying diameter section of said shaft together with one of the two shaft mounted components, and covering at least partially said exposed varying diameter section of said shaft against possible impact damages, sealing at least one of the joints between the exposed varying diameter section of said shaft and the shaft mounted components, protecting the stress concentrated area within or adjacent to the~~

exposed varying diameter section against possible corrosion damages.
~~protecting the shaft against corrosion and impact damages.~~

14. (currently amended): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 13, wherein the ~~sleeve sealing member~~ is at one end mounted / sealed on one of the shaft mounted components and at the other end mounted / sealed to the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft, said the other end of the ~~sleeve sealing member~~ having a bore diameter substantially smaller than the maximum sectional diameter of the exposed varying diameter section but larger than the minimum sectional diameter of the exposed varying diameter section and having a body length substantially longer than the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft.

15. (currently amended): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 13, wherein the ~~protective sleeve sealing member~~ is at one end mounted / sealed on one of the shaft mounted components and at the other end mounted / sealed on the other shaft mounted component, said ~~sleeve sealing member~~ having a body length substantially longer than the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft.

16. (currently amended): The apparatus for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 13, wherein

- (a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components is an assembly of axle / axle mounted bearing / axle mounted wheel ofin a railway vehicle carwheel set;
- (b) the shaft varying diameter sections is are axle dust guard section, axle fillet section or axle groove section located betweenadjacent to the axle mounted wheel andor the axle mounted bearing:-
- (c) the sealing member is made of elastomer and is mounted to outer or inner periphery of a ring component of the axle mounted bearing.

17. (currently amended): A method for protection of an assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, the method comprising at least:

- (a) Determining contact free shaft mounting areas that are portions of the shaft surfaces being underneath or in close proximity to shaft mounted components and being substantially free from contact with the shaft mounted components once the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components is completed;
- (b) Determining contact free mounting bore areas that are portions of the bore surfaces of the shaft mounted components being fitted or in close proximity

~~to the shaft and being substantially free from contact with the shaft once the assembly of the shaft / the shaft mounted components is completed;~~

(e)(a) Determining stress concentrated areas on the shaft surfaces and/or on the bore surfaces of the shaft mounted components that are subject to local high mechanical stresses ~~and are substantially included within the contact-free shaft mounting surfaces or the contact free mounting bore surfaces~~;

(b) Selecting a contact-free shaft mounting area and/or a contact-free mounting bore area, said contact-free shaft mounting areas being a portion of the shaft surface substantially free from contact with the shaft mounted component and in close proximity to said stress concentrated areas, said contact-free mounting bore areas being a portion of the bore surface of the shaft mounted components substantially free from contact with the shaft and in close proximity to said stress concentrated areas;

(d)(c) Mounting or depositing, at least partially, reserves of sacrificial metal to said selected contact-free shaft mounting areas and/or to said selected contact-free mounting bore areas, said reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft and the shaft mounted components, said reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to both the shaft and the shaft mounted components against corrosion and preventing corrosion related failures in stress concentrated areas;

(e)(d) Installing the shaft mounted components by the bores to the shaft.

18. (Previously presented): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc alloy deposited to the contact-free shaft mounting areas or to the contact-free mounting bore areas.

19. (Previously presented): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc deposited to the contact-free shaft mounting areas or to the contact-free mounting bore areas by inorganic zinc silicate coating, electroplating, thermal spraying or galvanizing.

20. (Previously presented): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal are deposited to the contact-free shaft mounting areas and to the contact-free mounting bore areas together with mounting lubricant / sealant prior to the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted component.

21. (Previously presented): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein the reserves of sacrificial metal being either mounted or deposited, at least partially, to said contact free shaft mounting areas only or to said contact free mounting bore areas only, said reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft

and to the shaft mounted components, said reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft and to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to both the shaft surfaces and to the bore surfaces against corrosion and preventing corrosion related failures in stress concentrated areas.

22. (Previously presented): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein

- (a) the contact-free shaft mounting areas are portions of shaft fillet and its immediate peripheries or portions of shaft groove and its immediate peripheries that are substantially free from contact with the shaft mounted components after completion of assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components;
- (b) the contact-free mounting bore areas are portions of the bore surfaces of the shaft mounted components being fitted over or in close proximity to the shaft fillet or the shaft groove.

23. (currently amended): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 17, wherein

- (a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted component is an assembly of axle / axle mounted components bearing / axle mounted wheel of in a railway vehicle car wheel set;
- (b) the contact-free shaft mounting areas are portions of axle fillet surfaces, axle groove surfaces, axle journal surfaces and axle dust guard surfaces being substantially free from contact with the axle mounted components;
- (c) the contact-free mounting bore areas are portions of bore surfaces of axle mounted bearing components including backing rings, seal wear rings and spacer rings.

24. (currently amended): A method for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, the apparatus comprising at least:

- (a) Determining Selecting contact-free internal areas that are portions of internal surfaces of the shaft mounted components being in contact with internal lubricant and being substantially free from contact with other shaft mounted components once the shaft mounted components are assembled to the shaft;
- (b) Mounting or depositing internal reserves of sacrificial metal, at least partially, to said contact-free internal areas, said internal reserves of sacrificial metal being connected electrically to the shaft mounted components, said internal reserves of sacrificial metal being anodic to the shaft mounted components therefore providing cathodic protection to the shaft mounted components against corrosion;

(c) Adding internal lubricant to the internal surface of shaft mounted components;

(d) Installing the shaft mounted components to the shaft.

25. (Previously presented): The method for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 24, wherein the internal reserves of sacrificial metal are zinc or zinc alloy deposited to the contact-free internal areas. . . .

26. (Previously presented): The method for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 24, wherein the internal reserves of sacrificial metal are magnesium or magnesium alloys and are mounted to the contact-free internal areas.

27. (currently amended): The method for protection of internal surfaces of shaft mounted components against corrosion in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 24, wherein

(a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted component is an assembly of axle / axle mounted bearing ~~of~~~~a~~ in a railway vehicle ~~or~~~~a~~ wheel set;

(e)(b) Contact-free internal areas are portions of bearing cup surface, bearing spacer ring surface being in contact with internal lubricant and being substantially free from contact with other bearing components.

28. (currently amended): A method for protection of an assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, the method comprising at least:

- (a) Determining—a maximum sectional diameters and—a minimum sectional diameters in one or a plurality of adjacent a-varying diameter sections of said shaft;
- (b) Mounting two-shaft mounted components, each being to said shaft with at least a gap between the shaft mounted components, said gap making one of the varying diameter sections of said shaft exposed to corrosion or impact damages and defining an exposed varying diameter section of said shaft in close proximity to said varying diameter section of said shaft from one end;
- (c) Mounting a protective sleeve-sealing member in resilient material to the exposed varying diameter section of said shaft, said sealing member protecting at least partially the exposed varying section of said shaft against possible impact damages, sealing at least one of the joints between the exposed varying diameter section of said shaft and the shaft mounted components, protecting stress concentrated areas on the surface of said shaft within or adjacent to the exposed varying diameter section against possible corrosion damages, said stress concentrated areas being subject to local high mechanical stressesshaft, covering at least partially said varying diameter section of said shaft and sealing at least one of the two joints between said shaft and shaft mounted components; said protective sleeve being mounted

~~to the shaft together with one of the two shaft mounted components and protecting the shaft against corrosion and impact damages.~~

29. (currently amended): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 28, wherein the protective sleeve-sealing member is at one end mounted / sealed on one of the shaft mounted components and at the other end mounted to the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft, said the other end of the sleeve-sealing member having a bore diameter substantially smaller than the maximum sectional diameter of the exposed varying diameter section but larger than the minimum sectional diameter of the exposed varying diameter section and having a body length substantially longer than the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft.

30. (currently amended): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 28, wherein the protective sleeve-sealing member is at one end mounted / sealed on one of the shaft mounted components and at the other end mounted / sealed on the other shaft mounted component, said sleeve-sealing member having a body length substantially longer than the exposed varying diameter section of the shaft.

31. (currently amended): The method for protection of the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components against corrosion and/or impact damages in a machinery or a vehicle, as recited in Claim 28, wherein

- (a) the assembly of shaft / shaft mounted components is an assembly of axle / axle mounted bearing / axle mounted wheel of in a railway vehicle car wheel set;
- (b) the shaft varying diameter sections of said shaft is the axle dust guard section, axle fillet section or axle groove section located between adjacent to the axle mounted wheel and to the axle mounted bearing.
- (c) the sealing member is made of elastomer and is mounted to outer or inner periphery of a ring component of the axle mounted bearing.